

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 4, 6-15, and 20-36 without prejudice. Please amend claims 1, 5, and 16-18 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A tree stand comprising a fluid reservoir about a tree retaining member including tree gripping means, wherein the tree gripping means comprise ~~at least one~~ projections;

wherein the fluid reservoir comprises a cylindrical or frustoconical member being closed at one end thereof by a base, wherein the tree retaining member is connected to the base;

wherein the tree retaining member comprises a substantially cylindrical hollow member and the tree gripping means comprising a plurality of projections arranged on the interior surface of the tree retaining member;

and wherein the tree retaining member is adapted to retain a tree inserted therein without using any moveable mechanical means such as screws, bolts or the like.

2-4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) A tree stand as claimed in claim 1, wherein the tree retaining member does not substantially protrude from the ~~cleared~~ fluid reservoir.

6-15. (Cancelled)

16. (Currently Amended) A tree stand as claimed in Claim 1 [[15]] wherein the projections ~~comprise veins running~~ substantially axially with the tree retaining member.

17. (Currently Amended) A tree stand as claimed in Claim 16 wherein the ~~veins~~ projections are arranged to maintain a degree of separation between a tree trunk inserted into the tree stand, and portions of the interior surface of the tree retaining member.

18. (Currently Amended) A tree stand as claimed in claim ~~15~~ 17 wherein the projections include a sharp or pointed portion arranged in use to at least partially penetrate the trunk of a tree inserted into the tree retaining member.

19. (Previously Presented) A tree stand as claimed in claim 1 wherein the fluid reservoir and tree retaining member are in fluid communication.

20-36. (Cancelled)